

Through 2023, the cost to States is now estimated to be an additional \$118 billion. In my home State of Georgia, the expansion will cost the State about \$2.5 billion through 2020. Money in the budget to pay for this expansion will come at the expense of higher education, transportation, and law enforcement services. Nationally 24.7 million people who will be added to the Medicaid rolls will be entering a broken system where patients are denied access to about 40 percent of the physicians because reimbursement rates do not keep up with medical costs.

Two years ago the legislative process that unfolded before us was not something any Senator should be proud of today. Backroom deal making and forcing legislation through under a subversive process left the American people angry and upset with Congress. If we don't understand that, just look at the approval rating of Congress today, and this played a major role in that approval rating.

I hope in the future we will have an opportunity to revisit the system. Our system does need reforming, but it needs to be done in the right way and it needs to be done in a very transparent way. I hope we can come up with a solution that is actually supported by the American public, not solutions that make the American public angry.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBAMA/MEDVEDEV EXCHANGE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today greatly disturbed and upset, as are many Americans, by the comments President Obama made on Monday to outgoing Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at the nuclear security summit in Seoul, Korea. The exchange, which was accidentally recorded by a Russian journalist, suggests that President Obama's stance on missile defense will change after the November election. It implies that the President is willing to make more concessions to an authoritarian government that has caused Americans concern time and time again. It raises questions about what else might be hidden on the President's agenda if he secures a second term in the White House.

Americans can view the recording themselves as President Obama tells Mr. Medvedev:

On all these issues, but particularly missile defense, this can be solved but it's important for him [Putin] to give me space.

"Him" meaning former and future President Vladimir Putin. Mr. Medvedev responds by saying:

Yeah, I understand. I understand your message about space. Space for you.

President Obama then goes on to say:

This is my last election. After my election, I have more flexibility.

It is unbelievable and chilling that President Obama would make his election a factor in how he deals with an important national security issue that could have dangerous implications for America and its allies. Even the hint of compromising on our missile defense capability is reckless when the prospect of nuclear-armed missiles is a real and growing threat.

Equally alarming is the looming question lingering over what the President actually means when he says "more flexibility." The administration continues to press for resetting bilateral relations but fails to follow through on an approach that takes into consideration how Russia has not made good on its promises in the past. Simply put, we cannot trust the Russian Government to keep its word. We have no reason to believe that greater cooperation will come from giving the Russians what they want.

The question now arises: How can we trust our own President not to say one thing before the election and yet do something entirely different afterwards? Let us not forget the Russian Ambassador vetoed two United Nations Security Council resolutions supporting the Syrian people, a move that prompted the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, to say that Russia decided to stand with a dictator. Indeed, Russia seems comfortable standing beside a dictator.

In addition, Russian officials rejected the idea of tougher sanctions against Iran despite a report from the International Atomic Energy Agency reinforcing concerns about Iran's nuclear program. Russia also voted against the United Nations General Assembly resolution expressing concern over the "violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights" in North Korea.

Many of my colleagues and I have come to the floor on multiple occasions to express our concern with Russia's deteriorating rule of law and respect for human rights. This is not the kind of relationship President Obama promised when he pressed for passage of the new START treaty in late 2010 over strong objections from many of my colleagues. It sends the wrong signal to our allies throughout Europe who are worried about undue pressure from Russia. At the end of the day, better U.S.-Russian relations are not a foregone conclusion, and President Obama would be wise to remember that one-sided promises are not the means to get there. He should also not forget that the Constitution requires the advice and consent of the Senate on foreign policy decisions.

Over the coming months the Senate will likely take up several issues related to Russia, and I look forward to having a frank discussion about the President's ideas and the President's intentions. Mr. Obama's comments in Seoul are only one instance of the

President pledging to have more flexibility after election day, but they rightly cause us to speculate about what else he expects to do. Americans are right to wonder what other promises are being made that we do not know about.

At the end of the exchange in Seoul, President Obama and President Medvedev clasped hands and Mr. Medvedev promised, "I will transmit this information to Vladimir." In other words, but for the accident of an open microphone, the President's intentions would have been known by Mr. Putin, but not known by the American people. Mr. Medvedev's reply is a grim reminder of what happens when one person is able to seize unrestrained power, as Mr. Putin has demonstrated, and should be a lesson for all of us. It also should give all Americans pause as we approach this fall's election.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REID). Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMPOSING A MINIMUM EFFECTIVE TAX RATE FOR HIGH-INCOME TAXPAYERS—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, S. 2230 is now pending; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, S. 2230, a bill to reduce the deficit by imposing a minimum effective tax rate for high-income taxpayers.

Harry Reid, Sheldon Whitehouse, John D. Rockefeller IV, Barbara Boxer, Patrick J. Leahy, Jeff Bingaman, Richard J. Durbin, Daniel K. Akaka, Al Franken, Jack Reed, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Carl Levin, Richard Blumenthal, Bernard Sanders, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived and the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2230 occur on Monday, April 16, when the Senate resumes legislative session immediately following the vote on the confirmation of Stephanie Dawn Thacker.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?